

---

**Policy** NAA requires that a Letter of Intent (LOI) be submitted to the Area Director and approved, prior to the submission of the Form ARS- 425 (Authorization to Apply For and Use Funds from Outside Sources) for extramural proposals, and submission of the 416/417/550A for non-funded extramural activities.

Area approval of the LOI is mandatory, prior to the submission of any type of grant proposal (including ARS-funded grant programs), or the establishment of a non-funded extramural agreement.

---

**Supporting Authority** P&P 321.1, "Acceptance of Non-Appropriated Funds to Conduct Research or Perform Services"

---

**Applicable Extramural Action** This policy refers to the following extramural actions:

- Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA)
- BARD Research Grant Agreement (Foreign RCA)
- Reimbursable Cooperative Agreement (RCA) /Trust Fund Cooperative Agreement (TFCA)
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Non-funded Cooperative Agreement (NFCA)
- Interagency Reimbursable Agreement (IA)

Refer to Attachment A for actions requiring a LOI and subsequent requirements.

---

**Justification** The NAA believes that the Form ARS- 425 fails to provide much of the information needed to make an adequate evaluation of the appropriateness and relevance of the proposed research to the Agency, location, and parent CRIS project. To overcome this limitation, the NAA established this letter of intent policy that precedes submission of the Form ARS-425 or in some cases only the 416/417 and 550A.

The submission of the LOI ensures that research time and public funding support is in compliance with CRIS guidelines. It is not the intent of the NAA to inhibit collaboration with other scientists or organizations that can enhance and extend funded research projects.

---

**LOI Procedures** Procedures for the Letter of Intent are defined below.

1. A LOI must be submitted, **through** line management, **to** the Area Director for approval prior to: entry of the Form ARS-425 into ARIS,

---

**LOI Procedures Continued**

- submission of a proposal to an outside source of funding, and drafting any related agreement document (refer to Attachment A).
2. Use the approved LOI memo format (Attachment B).
  3. LOI is only to be submitted via electronic mail (e-mail) to the Area Director (wilda.martinez@ars.usda.gov). **A hard copy is NOT to be created and sent to the Area Director.**
  4. The description of the project should be succinct but contain enough information that the recipients will know what each participant will contribute, why their contribution is important to the success of the project, and how this project is relevant to the ongoing CRIS research.
  5. Funding information or lack thereof will be used to determine the type of formal agreement, in addition to information regarding who is submitting the proposal.
  6. Notification of Area Director approval/disapproval will be sent via e-mail from the Area Office to the requestor.
- 

**Exceptions**

Only if time is critical to submission, will a LOI put forth concurrently with the ARIS documentation be accepted.

---

**Failure To Comply**

Failure to comply could result in disapproval by the Area Director of your cooperative research project.

---

**Expiration**

LOI approvals will be **valid for a period of one year**, effective the date approval was e-mailed from the Area Director to the requestor. During this time period, submission of the Form ARS-425 and/or proposal documents will be accepted. Receipt of the ARS-425 beyond this 1-year time frame **will not** be accepted without strong justification.

---

**Attachments**

A – Letter of Intent Action Table, 2 pages  
B – Boiler plate Letter of Intent

---

<b><i>SY NEEDS A LETTER OF INTENT WHEN PARTICIPATING ON OR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL TO:</i></b>	<b><i>AFTER SY's LETTER OF INTENT IS APPROVED, LOCATION WILL:</i></b>	<b><i>AFTER SY PROPOSAL IS APPROVED/DISAPPROVED LOCATION WILL:</i></b>
<b>BARD</b>	Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with proposal.	a) If no funding to ARS or if funding is less than \$25,000, then activate the ARS-425. If funding is greater than \$25,000, add 416/417 to the ARS-425. Request establishment of Foreign RCA. b) Cancel the ARS-425, if unfunded.
<b>CRADA</b>	Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with proposed project statement of work.	a) If no funding to ARS or if funding is less than \$25,000, then activate the ARS-425. If funding is greater than \$25,000, add 416/417 to the ARS-425. b) Cancel the ARS-425, if unfunded.
<b>EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC)/EUROPEAN UNION (EU)</b>	Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with proposal.	(No funds to ARS.) Special LOI between ARS scientist & EC. Activate <b>OR</b> cancel the ARS-425, if disapproved.
<b>ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)</b>	Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with proposal.	a) If funding is less than \$25,000, then activate the ARS-425. If funding is greater than \$25,000 add 416/417 to the ARS-425. Request the establishment of a Foreign RCA. b) Cancel the ARS-425, if unfunded.
<b>FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS</b> (e.g., CSREES grant programs, APHIS, NSF, DOE, DOD, NIH)	a) Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with grant proposal & budget if funds are to come to ARS.  b) If <u>no funds</u> are coming to ARS, then submit ARS grant proposal to Area office for AD signature (NO Form ARS-425).	a) If funding is less than \$25,000, then activate the ARS-425. If funding is greater than \$25,000, add 416/417 to the ARS-425. Request the establishment of a RCA or IA <b>OR</b> cancel the ARS-425, if unfunded. b) Submit ARIS 416/417/550a to establish a NFCA with grant recipient, if grant was funded.
<b>NON-FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS</b> (e.g., United Soybean Board, Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission, Maine Potato Board)	Submit ARIS Form ARS-425 with grant proposal & budget.	a) If funding is less than \$25,000, then activate the ARS-425. If funding is greater than \$25,000, add 416/417 to the ARS-425. Request the establishment of a RCA or TFCA. b) Cancel the ARS-425, if unfunded.
<b>ARS GRANT PROGRAMS</b> (e.g., Nat'l Plant Germplasm System (NPGS), Internat'l Scientific Enhancement Program (ISEP), Nat'l Alliance for Food Safety & Security (NAFSS))	Submit the grant proposal to the applicable ARS office (NO ARIS REQUIRED).	a) If approved, prepare a CRIS transfer to bring funding into your D CRIS. b) Submit ARIS 416/417/550A to establish a sub-award, if applicable.
<b>NPS PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (PA) REQUESTS</b>	Submit the PA request to the Area for AD signature (NO ARIS REQUIRED).	a) If approved, CRIS transfer will be prepared by the Area to bring funding into your D CRIS. b) Submit agreement request package to establish a sub-award, if applicable. (NO ARIS REQUIRED)

**NAA LETTER OF INTENT POLICY****ATTACHMENT A**

<b><i>IF SY's <u>APPROVED</u> PROPOSAL RESULTS IN NEEDING A...</i></b>	<b><i>SY/LOCATION WILL:</i></b>	<b><i>ANY SUBSEQUENT ACTION(S) REQUIRED BY THE LOCATION:</i></b>
<b>MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)</b>	Submit agreement request package to the ADO for the establishment of a MOU <u>along with</u> ARIS documentation.	
<b>NON-FUNDED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (NFCA)</b>	Submit agreement request package to the ADO for the establishment of a NFCA <u>along with</u> ARIS documentation.	
<b>REIMBURSABLE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (RCA)</b>	Submit agreement request package to the ADO for the establishment of a RCA <u>along with</u> ARIS documentation.	Update the ARS-425 information, if needed.
<b>TRUST FUND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT (TFCA)</b>	Submit agreement request package to the ADO for the establishment of a TFCA <u>along with</u> ARIS documentation.	Update the ARS-425 information, if needed.
<b>INTERAGENCY REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENT (IA)</b>	Call Area Budget Analyst and provide contact information for the funding agency. Submit AD-672, electronically, to the Budget Analyst, if agreement is not being submitted by the funding agency.	Update the ARS-425 information, if needed.

## NAA LETTER OF INTENT POLICY

Attachment B

---

SUBJECT: Letter of Intent

TO: Wilda H. Martinez, Area Director

THROUGH: Center Director (if applicable)  
Research Leader

FROM: Scientist

This is a request for approval to...(e.g., establish a research agreement with, submit a proposal to, etc.)\_\_\_\_\_.

Provide where appropriate, name(s) and institution of the collaborators and anticipated duration of the agreement or proposal, including who is submitting the proposal.

Briefly describe: what you will do, what the collaborator will do, what you will do together, and why this work is relevant to CRIS (supply title of applicable CRIS project).

Provide estimated ARS CRIS expenditures, including SY time, and/or anticipated incoming resources and their use (e.g., maybe some of the funds will go into another type of agreement, so indicate the intended cooperator).

Please reply to this e-mail with a response noted below. Center Director/  
Research Leader initials denote concurrence.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Disapproved: \_\_\_\_\_

RL Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
CD Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Area Director's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

COMMENTS:

cc:

Program Analyst ([helen.begley@ars.usda.gov](mailto:helen.begley@ars.usda.gov))

Extramural Agreements Specialist ([ingrid.charlton@ars.usda.gov](mailto:ingrid.charlton@ars.usda.gov))

Budget Analyst ([sandra.dubois@ars.usda.gov](mailto:sandra.dubois@ars.usda.gov))

Technology Transfer Coordinator ([cgcrawford@errc.ars.usda.gov](mailto:cgcrawford@errc.ars.usda.gov))